

A
M I R R O R
FOR THE
MULTITUDE;
OR,
W I L K E S
AND HIS ABETTORS
NO PATRIOTS.

G L A S G O W:

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M I R R O R

AS this Essay is benevolently calculated to stem the tide of faction, promote national tranquillity, rectify the conceptions of the mistaken impetuous multitude, by setting men and measures in a proper light, and by giving the South Britons just and favourable ideas of their Northern fellow-subjects; so it is therefore to be hoped, that those of a pacific and truly patriotic spirit, and who are sincere lovers of their king and country, will countenance and encourage the sale of the Mirror, that it may have the greater and more benign influence, by being extensively circulated.

The Authors of the MONTHLY REVIEW have made the following remarks concerning the writer of the Mirror.

‘ The author’s view is to correct and restrain popular prejudice and phrenzy. He is severe on the conduct and character, both public and private, of Mr. Wilkes; whom he considers, in every respect, as one of the most worthless of human beings. He has many just sentiments of patriotism, national unanimity, public order, &c.’

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M I R R O R

F O R T H E

M U L T I T U D E.

FALSE patriots, like the false mother, who applied to Solomon for justice, impudently lay claim to, and pretend more than ordinary regard for, their country, and that from the most wicked and selfish motives; who, rather than their ambitious views should be cut short, and their vile restless passions go ungratified, will cruelly divide, and to the utmost of their power bring it to distress, in hopes, some how or other, to be gainers by their atrocious, discordant measures. But true patriots, like the true mother, will rather forego their private right, in some measure, than secure it by means which must divide the nation, and bring calamity to their country; who being

under the influence of generous, benevolent principles, will in no case seek their own advantage to the prejudice and diminution of public welfare; and as the meanest apprehension may clearly perceive, that faction and discord introduce the greatest of evils into a state, and that a kingdom long divided against itself cannot stand; therefore the real patriot will use his utmost efforts to support national peace and tranquillity; and if mal-administration should at any time come under his notice, though to him detestable, yet he will by fair remonstrance, not seditious scurrility, by candid active scrutiny, not virulent detraction, endeavour to detect such as are concerned therein; and by the most conciliating, salutary methods, remove the grievances of his country. Envy and detraction are inseparable, so that on whomsoever the former fixes its eye, the latter instantly opens its mouth, and with hateful virulence utters every thing which can be vilely suggested, in order to render their object odious to mankind.

In all ages and reigns these Luciferian passions have, more or less, infested and dis-

turbed private as well as public life; and with great truth and much regret it may be observed, that the turbulency and faction of our times have had their rise and continuance from these restless, flagitious affections. O patriotism! how often of late has thy sacred name been prostituted, and affixed to deeds and measures which thou must with virtuous indignation disclaim! O amiable and blessed liberty! (in which religious, civil, and virtuous freedom is implied) how strangely art thou abased and abashed by the unparalleled impudence of one who is a notorious incendiary, a scurrilous author, an editor of blasphemy, and yet, who arrogates the honour of being thy only patron! "Publish it not in Gath, nor tell it in the streets of Askelon." If scurrility and sedition constitute a patriot, surely Mr. Wilkes may be allowed the most meritorious one since the tumultuous days of Jack Straw and Wat. Tyler; having maltreated the best and most lenitive of sovereigns, set subject against subject; and, to evince the goodness of his heart, and delicacy of his manners, he has scattered, in-

discriminately, on at least a million of our northern fellow-subjects, the most irritating reproach, and virulent calumny.

It is at all times, and in all places, no less rude than unphilosophical, to reproach any man, or number of men, on account of locality of birth. If men are to be deemed worthy or unworthy according to the fertility or sterility of their native country, then savages and Hottentots must be preferable to Britons, as they are born in countries of a far more rich and prolific soil than can be found in any part of Great Britain. And, on the other hand, Danes, Swedes, Swifs, &c. must be esteemed mean, vile, and despicable; because their countries are barren and mountainous. Advantages of birth are the absolute allotments of Providence, concerning which we are entirely passive, and in no way instrumental; and therefore act a very irrational and ungrateful part, whenever we revile and insult others because of their being born in a country, and in circumstances less favourable than our own. How pardonable such conduct may be in the unthinking many, it is certainly highly cul-

pable in one who claims the attention of the public, and sets up for the patron of national liberty! But from such a patron, Good Lord, deliver us.

Reproachful epithets, and scurrilous national distinctions are the sure marks of a vitiated seditious mind, and so incompatible with patriotism, as to be entirely subversive of it, by inflaming the minds, and disuniting, in the most antipathizing manner, the hearts and affections of the community; and as Mr. W. has distinguished himself in this detestable species of inflammatory writing, he may well be deemed the present prime national incendiary; but such is the false judgment of the infatuated multitude, that they set him up, and revere him as a meritorious patriot! In this, indeed, the assuming patriots of our times, behave much like the holy governors of the Romish Church, who never fail to canonize that man for a saint who has been zealously wicked in destroying and ruining those of a different persuasion, under the pretext of supporting and advancing theirs: for, if cruelty and persecution are consistent with meek, mer-

ciful Christianity; why may not riots, rageous abuse, and vile scurrility cordially agree with benign, benevolent patriotism?

Most true it is, that when the multitude are once gained, and fomented by any leader, they are easily incited to what they at first never intended; and to follow him blindly and furiously through all his meanders, though their passions and views be all the while quite different from his.—His business is to make them believe (nor is it a hard task) that he has no design nor interest but theirs, till at last they sacrifice all for his interest against their own: for they therefore believe him a patriot, because they see him angry and opposing; a very false rule to go by; but the populace seldom have any truer. The false and true patriots, in all their efforts, propose one and the same end, i. e. the good of the public; and are only to be distinguished by the means they take in order to attain that proposed end.

As the good and virtuous patriot is influenced by generous benevolent principles, so his actions will be altogether uniform,

and correspond with these social principles. Rage, riot, malice, falsehood, and scurrility, will be the detestation of his soul; but, on the other hand, these will be the very engines by which the false patriot will act, as being the fittest tools to accomplish his own ends, but not the good of the public: for, having neither worth, honour, nor honesty of his own, he will, with wicked assiduity, endeavour to vilify and blacken those who have, if they stand in his way, and so raise his own credit by defaming and sinking the reputation of all whom he envies: but were the populace more discerning, and less credulous, these vile preposterous measures could never succeed; but so it is, that they generally do; and among the many who have obtained the favour of the multitude by detraactive, scurrilous, defamatory means, few have succeeded in so very an extraordinary manner as Mr. Wilkes; and the only reason which can be assigned why he has thus succeeded, is, that of his having out-done all others in falsehood, calumny, and mean abuse, as his inimitable North-Briton (in all its numbers) sufficiently evidences.

The Union of England and Scotland was esteemed by our best patriots, and ablest politicians, to be the noblest civil affair that ever was brought about in Queen Ann's, or any other reign; as the Scots, by their vicinity and bravery, were the only people we had most reason either to love or fear; seeing their situation and intrepidity qualified them to do us the greatest evil or the greatest good. But now, being united by the best policy to our mutual advantage, we may be allowed modestly to say, none can harm us, unless we are disjoined in our affections; from whence animosities, riots, and insurrections naturally proceed, which render the wisest political engagements of no effect, and if carried high, may possibly terminate in a dissolution of that national union, which (if supported by unanimity) is the chiefest security to each other, and the greatest terror and offence to our foreign enemies; and therefore we ought to be zealously careful to cultivate national tranquillity, and wisely reflect, that there is a neighbouring ambitious state which views us with a jealous eye, and which is ever ready

to ruin and enslave whomsoever it is able to overcome, as the recent conquest of Corsica does clearly evidence. As a sincere lover of my country, I hope, that such an unhappy disjunction will never happen; and am fully persuaded that no true patriot, no good judicious subject, either on the south or north side of Tweed, doth wish it may ever happen; but no thanks to the pestilential, and so much idolized Mr. Wilkes, that it has not already happened; who, by a torrent of the foulest scurrility, and irritating calumny, has done all in his power to stimulate and rouse the passions of the North-Britons, and render them hideous and detestable to those of the South, even at a time, when they were unanimously loyal to their prince, and who had but a very little while before, fought in a very signalized manner for the honour and interest of Great Britain. Could such treatment proceed from patriotism? Impossible; but most certainly from inveterate malice, and odious ingratitude.

The French formerly proved themselves much more honourable, and far better po-

liticians, and do at all times act more consistently with national preservation than the famed Mr. W. and his patriotic abettors; who, when the Scots were their allies, used to distinguish them with the highest marks of honour and esteem, by naturalizing and ennobling their great men, and giving them places of emolument, and granting the whole nation immunities in trade beyond all other foreigners whomsoever; nay, so much were they carested and held in high respect for their fidelity and bravery, that the Scots alone were continued for some centuries to be the life-guards of their sovereign. Thus were the Scots honoured and rewarded for their faithful attachment and personal worth; and this is the way in which all good citizens and true patriots estimate and distinguish the friends to, and worthy members of, a community; and this is the very way in which God himself judges and discriminates the whole human race; i. e. according to their good or evil actions, but not according to locality of birth and adventitious circumstances.

To praise and revile men for what they had neither will nor power to bring about, nor prevent, argues a base partiality, a rude and stupid exercise of judgment ; and is a fertile source of unjust reproach and mischievous arrogance in a mixt community ; is altogether inconsistent with peace, unanimity, and good order, and consequently, diametrically opposite to true patriotifm.

Similar to what is now recited of the French, was the truly grateful and patriotic behaviour of the citizens of Dantzick, when they were closely and strongly besieged by the Poles, who intended to bring them under their servile yoke ; but by an enclosed number of valiant Scots, led on by one of the noble family of Douglas, who, with astonishing fearless ardor, sallied out upon the besiegers, put them to flight, raised the siege, and so saved the city from tyrannical vassalage. The Dantzickers, thoroughly sensible of this glorious deliverance, and the great merit of their heroic deliverers, called the street from which they issued out, Scotland, and placed the arms of that kingdom over the gate ; and granted the Scots the pri-

vilege of being freemen ever after, and a perpetual exemption from all duties in their commerce with that opulent city.

To these distinguished and indubitable proofs of honourable respect shewn to the Scots, I shall add a brief remark made by the celebrated Puffendorf, concerning their martial character, in his History of Europe, "The Scots, says he, when a distinct kingdom, were esteemed the best soldiers in Europe," (and consequently the best in the world) "but since Oliver Cromwell's time, and their being united with England, their name has fallen into obscurity." Thus the Scots by the national union, and by being blended with the English in most of their valorous achievements, are indiscriminated, so that whatever is performed by both in junction, goes under the name of the latter, or that of Britons; and the Scots thereby have lost their name in the annals of fame; and as this brave and martial people are equally deserving of fame with ourselves, our fellow-subjects, and yet undistinguished in what is deemed great and honourable, and this by them made no

matter of complaint or regret, do they not then monstrously and ungratefully deviate from the generous instances of political respect above specified, as well as shamefully oppose and violate the rules of benevolence, good-breeding, and true policy, who discriminate the Scots by scurrilous reproach, and and aggravating infamy? Such treatment is utterly inconsistent with the improved genius, and truly grateful spirit of genuine, judicious Englishmen; therefore the disingenuous Mr. Wilkes, and those who espouse and approve of his scurrilous and seditious publications, ought to be looked upon, and regarded as a spurious, degenerate offspring, as national disturbers, and the turbulent pests of civil society.

Sallust justly observed to Julius Caesar, "That a vicious man is qualified by his life, manners, and disposition, to fall in with, and promote any evil design;" and if it be asked why Mr. Wilkes took up the pen of calumny, and exercised it with such scandalous inveteracy against the government and the Scots, the truest and best reason which can be given, is at hand, viz. be-

cause a certain nobleman, of Scots extraction (but English-born, and in a high office of state) was supposed to be instrumentally concerned in preventing this worthy gentleman (whom vice and extravagancy had made poor) from having a lucrative employment under the government, which he had applied for †. Upon this disappointment, revenge, envy, and malice, instantly influenced his head and heart, so that he, as it were, instantaneously commenced an alarming zealous patriot, by force of their dictates; and, to render the sincerity of his pretensions indisputable, reviles, reproaches, and vilifies all in place; because he was not admitted into place.—The ministry then, in his style, were horribly corrupted; without honour, honesty, or capacity; but particularly the minister, who (as he apprehended) had obstructed his healing views; against him his most powerful batteries of invidious detraction were raised; and the Scots

† If Mr. W. denies what is said to be the true cause why he commenced an inveterate scurrilist, &c. it behoves him to assign a truer. And, to smooth the asperity of his immoral character, let him try if he can produce a good reason for his acting mischievously and wickedly.

(whom he mischievously insinuated were favoured by him) became the only butt of his foul scurrility; nay, even good majesty itself must have some bespatterings of his obloquy, and we may well presume, for this very sinister reason, because its lucrative golden beams were not vouchsafed to shine forth on, and cherish and support his prodigal vices.

Thus from fordid private pique, and from the vilest passions which agitate the human heart, Wilkes's glorious spirit of liberty and patriotism derived its existence; a spirit (in the strictest and most literal sense) that was conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity.

A vicious, volatile man is ever restless, and perniciously busy in every station of life; and, if in want, will stop at no means nor measures to remove it. Thus Mr. Wilkes, through voluptuousness and profligacy, had miserably reduced his finances, the government would not grant him a place to replenish them; his appetites strong, pungent, and clamorous to be satisfied, and yet quite unable to gratify them; thus situated, thus

enslaved, thus impuls'd, what could an indigent vicious man do better than to enlist on that side which would best answer his dissolute needy condition? And surely it must be granted, that in this respect, he has, in a very extraordinary manner, obtained his end; seeing the party to whom he is engaged are now rearing him up a fortune for his late litigious vices, in lieu of that which his former debauched vices had battered down. O distressed virtue! when, and where, wilt thou meet with such healing assistance, and cordial friendship?

Not any thing can more indicate a delirious, depraved, and besotted judgment, than to believe that the evils and misconduct of government can be either removed or rectified by a vicious indigent regulator: this were to believe that Tartarus may conceive and bring forth Elysium, or that the wickedest immoral agent is capable of performing the most pure and virtuous actions.—Wilkes and Liberty! Strange unallied connection! Popular propriety with a witness. Wilkes the support of national liberty! A

blundering, dangerous assertion, and which is in effect to say, that gross licentiousness is the support of religious and civil government, confusion that of order, discord that of unanimity, scurrility that of urbanity, rebellion that of loyalty, vice that of virtue, and, in a word, that any thing which is the destruction of another, is the support of that which it destroys; and in this preposterous sense only, can it be with truth and safety asserted, that Wilkes is the support of liberty.

Civil liberty seems to be nothing less than the free enjoyment of such articles as the community have agreed to, and established by laws for the common benefit and preservation of the whole; and our submitting to, or disobeying of which laws, is that surely which makes us either good or bad citizens; and so far as these laws correspond with good morality and the will of God, our attachment to, or deviation from, denominates us either worthy or unworthy, virtuous or vicious members of society, and we become objects of rewards and punishments accordingly.

To whomsoever the execution of our laws are committed, they are our governors, and according to the right or wrong exercise of the power they are entrusted with, their government is to be esteemed good or bad, wise or foolish, upright or corrupt.

That national liberty now is, and has been since his gracious Majesty's accession to the throne (notwithstanding what loud-mouth'd faction roars out to the contrary) as extensive as ever it was known to be in any former reign; and that his government has been, and still is, as faithful, mild, and regular, as any preceding one, may be easily evinced; nor can the rejecting of inglorious Wilkes (that national firebrand) as a member of parliament, nor searching for, and seizing him by dint of a general warrant, give just cause to denominate the ministry either weak, arbitrary, or corrupt; but, on the contrary, (if judiciously and calmly scanned) these very procedures will prove them to have been the steady friends, and active guardians of their country's welfare, dignity, and peace: for, as Mr. Wilkes had, by

his inflammatory seditious publications, incensed and enraged the nation, and thereby set subject against subject, vilely aspers'd the ministry, and had thrown out such malignant insinuations as might best serve to alienate the hearts of subjects from the best of sovereigns; and all this done in the most avowed, open, insolent, and audacious manner: thus provoked, thus insulted, and the honour of his Majesty, and the tranquillity of the nation deeply and dangerously concerned, did it not therefore, on these very alarming and affecting accounts, highly become the government to seize and secure, by the speediest and most effectual means, the mischievous author of so much public disorder and national calamity? And the more especially, as there was great cause to suspect, that as he who had so openly and profusely thrown about the firebrands of sedition, might have matter of a still more combustible and treacherous nature reserved in private, which dilatory measures might have given him time to conceal or play off, as it best suited, his detested purposes.

Had this procedure made good the very reasonable suspicion here intimated, the mode of arrest (I presume) would have been strictly legal, and as it failed, it ought rather to be deemed a temporary expedient, than an arbitrary stretch, because the peace and happiness of the community were intended by it, and because the person proceeded against was a notorious pestilential offender.

As the best of human laws are fallible, and so circumscribed as not to be sufficient to prevent every possible evil that may arise in a state, and if in some cases of exigency, this deficiency is made up by an honest exertion of these in power, in that which is manifestly (or may be clearly explained) for the good of the public, such exertion is a salutary dispensation of power, and not an abuse of it. But such is the base partiality of factious party, that they never put a good construction on the measures of ministers whom they envy (however consistent with truth, and the welfare of the public) if a bad one can be invented, though accompanied with palpable marks of ma-

lice and falshood; and it is from this horrid mischievous source of wicked inflammatory censure that the most of our national calamitous divisions proceed.

Of all the measures taken to support national discord, none ever reflected more deserved dishonour on any party assuming the name of patriots, or more evidently could give proof of the want of moral sentiment, and a sense of political dignity and happiness, than that of chusing Mr. Wilkes for a representative, and making his exclusion from the honourable house of commons a capital article of grievance. Loudly and vexatiously have they declaimed against the ministry, as consisting of persons of irregular lives, corrupt principles, and shamefully depraved, and therefore, say they, unfit to govern, &c. But, how strangely incompatible are these patriotic declaimers with their own declamation, by preferring, and, as it were, even idolizing a person gigantic in vice, and whose life and manners were a scandal to society, and which have been the cause of manifest accumulative injuries to the community?

That wise and good men are the fittest to execute laws must be granted, and as the wise and good are the fittest to execute laws, surely it must be granted also, that such only are fittest to make laws; of which very honourable and capable sort of legislators Mr. Wilkes is undoubtedly the very reverse, being destitute, absolutely destitute, both of property and good principles; and, consequently, he is entirely disqualified to be a constituent of the legislature, even upon the same principles of reasoning which our puritanical opposers urge against the continuation of corrupt or incapable ministers. And it should be further observed, that the King has as indubitable a right (by the constitution) to chuse his ministers, as the people have to chuse their representatives; and if through a fallible choice (which the best and wisest of princes are liable to make) they prove unfit to govern, and ought to be removed, it surely as necessarily follows, that a flagrant delinquent, incapacitated as just now recited, whom the people have chosen for their representative, (through a vitiated corrupt choice)

ought likewise to be rejected? * The expulsion, therefore, of Mr. Wilkes from the honourable house of commons, clearly evinces, that the worthy members had a proper sense of the nation's honour and welfare, and of their own dignity, by excluding one, from whom nothing could be expected but tumult, discord, and furious animosity, and by the doing of which they were strongly authorized by law, precedent, and reason, and consequently will obtain the applause and approbation of all discerning good men; and, though at present wrong perceptions, and violent destructive passions to a great and dangerous degree prevail, yet 'tis to be

* It has been judiciously observed by a political writer, "That if electors, losing all sense, reason, decency, and regard to their country, through the blind infatuation of an inflamed resentment, may elect, uncontrouled, a miscreant, justly confined in prison for notorious crimes, and an insolvent libeller of a mild, gracious, and good sovereign, we must bid farewell to the constitution of England, farewell to liberty, farewell to law and order, farewell to all a free born Briton ought to hold dear, valuable, and precious: there is, at once, an end to the happy mixed government of these realms; we are no longer free, but are the slaves of the very worst tyranny, that of a resentful, insane populace."

hoped, that right discernment and sociable affections will ere long take place, and at last happily triumph. It is false and iniquitous to assert, as many do, who know better, that the people are absolutely free to chuse whomsoever they will for representatives, and therefore are to be admitted into parliament when chosen by a majority, &c. To tell the people they are absolutely free, is the base artifice of the factious and seditious, who, by instilling false notions, work them up to their own vile purposes, and thereby draw the unwary, unthinking multitude to support and promote measures destructive of their own and their country's welfare.

Absolute freedom implies no law, no government, which (to fallible agents powerfully stimulated by selfish passions) instead of being a blessing, would be a curse; seeing from thence horrid disorders and destructive mischief must necessarily proceed; to prevent which, mankind have wisely chused to form themselves into communities, and circumscribed their freedom by laws for the sake of rectitude and self-pre-

fervation ; so that our constitution of government (which, upon the whole, is allowed to be the happiest and best upon earth) has put our liberty under many judicious regulations and restraints, insomuch, that what we call the free suffrage of the people is under restrictions, and is to be given as the law prescribes, and therefore it is, that we have no authoritative liberty (for instance) by our present constitution, to chuse a representative of no religion, or any other religion than that by law established, and as we are not authorized to chuse one but who is of the established church, surely then it is as manifest as is the sun, when in its meridian splendor, that we are in no degree legallized to elect one for a representative, who has, by his immoral, blasphemous publications, evinced himself an ANTICHRISTIAN, and of no religion, and for which he has been justly condemned and imprisoned by his country.

Ought they, or can they be esteemed lovers of virtue, religion, or civil government, or their country, who patronize a person of the vilest and most dissolute principles ; one

who glories in discord, and exults in iniquity? Can Mr. Wilkes be a friend of any other specie of liberty than that which is to be found in those fable regions, where hideous misrule, tumultuous rage, and alarming clamour prevail; and where wicked licentious spirits are doomed to reside?

Is he fit to be a constituent of the legislature whom vice has bankrupted, and who has grossly violated the laws of the community, both sacred and civil; and whose chiefest talent is that of subverting peace, and promoting uproar; and who has no other way to recommend himself but by aspersing and depreciating those whose virtues incur his hatred and disgust, and which would be his greatest honour to imitate?

If a part is taken for the whole, shall we not appear in the eyes of the world to be a nation of jarring wrong-heads, who have, for these several years, been running mad with envious opposition, and in pursuit after lewd licentiousness, under the borrowed dress, and sacred name of liberty; and who have raised the most unhappy impoli-

tic disturbances in support of its dissolute patron?

Court favourites and pensioners are often noticed with an evil eye, and it is by very many frequently alledged, that they are a hurt and a burden to a state; but it ought to be duly considered, that if a favourite or pensioner is deemed dangerous on the side of a good government and a virtuous prince, such an one must be infinitely more so on the side of faction and mal-contents; and is it not therefore vilely inconsistent for the latter to exclaim against the former for what they themselves openly and avowedly practise? which they most evidently do in the instance of depraved Wilkes, who is most significantly their adored minion and devoted pensioner, and who is (by loose principles and impoverishing appetites) under a far more impulsive influence to trespass the rules of righteous government, than the other by moral conduct is to infringe, or abridge, the just liberties of the people.

It is grossly absurd, as well as often truly dangerous, to estimate highly of men

by their vigour and eagerness in opposing a ministry. The best ministers have been frequently opposed by the worst men; even bad ministers have been opposed by men as bad as themselves; and the worst of men have always cloathed their opposition with the cloak of public good, with tenderness and compassion for the people, and a zeal for relieving and abolishing taxes, and for securing and increasing their liberty and privileges: but ambition, avarice, and revenge, which seldom or never own their true names, generally chuse that of patriotism.

John duke of Burgundy, who was the author of so much public confusion and desolation in France, set out with a pretence of zeal against taxes; that pretence gained him high popularity, that popularity enabled him to ruin France, which for many years he made a scene of blood and misery. It is needless to add, that though patriotism filled his mouth, yet nothing in reality prompted him but flaming ambition, and revenge against the Duke of Orleans for personal indignities, who, pro-

bably, was to him, what a certain unpopular nobleman is now to our favourite patriot, Mr. Wilkes, and his faithful adherents.

Is the most righteous administration ever free from opposition, or the most virtuous ministers from censure and reproach? It is to be wished they were, but I cannot remember that ever they were. Cicero was banished his country because he saved it, and the worst man in Rome had popularity enough to ruin the best. Even Catiline was a strenuous opposer of power, boldly charged the government with oppression, assumed the airs and language of a patriot, and expressed great zeal for liberty; so did also his execrable gang and followers, they were all opposers, had their bill of rights, and articles of grievances, all patriots, and, in their country's cause, they were all, without doubt, Wilkes and Liberty to a man.

As to the distinction between a court-party, and a country-party, 'tis a distinction as old as men and government, and will last as long; and as there are certainly

men who love their country, there are certainly others, whose concern for the public begins from themselves, and their country is always in danger when they are neglected.

I would by no means assert, or even suggest, that public spirit arises from private pique, or any idle narrow passion; but I will venture to say, and am fully assured, that private passion often and loudly calls itself public spirit; and that very selfish, very wicked, and very foolish men call themselves patriots, and traduce others, infinitely better and wiser than themselves, as enemies to their country. I doubt not but some oppose a just administration from good motives, and a well-meant intention; but I will venture to say again, that many others concur with them upon low and contemptible inducements, and with a view to their own interest only, patriots for themselves, and public-spirited for private pernicious ends. General complaints against public mismanagement and mal-administration are easily made, and therefore very common even in the best of times. The

Earl of Godolphin, † that good and virtuous minister, was charged with not having accounted to the public for above thirty-five millions of public money, though by the public accounts it satisfactorily and manifestly appeared that he had fairly applied every shilling; yet such was the bitterness and dishonesty of party and his enemies, that he was branded to the nation in a vote of the house of commons, with the above false and monstrous calumny, which at least for a while was by the greatest part of the nation believed, as a proof of the notorious injustice, as well as the blind credulity of party. Yet these his enemies set up for rescuing their country from ruin and misrule, and had raised a cry that the nation and the church were sinking, that the former ministry had been corrupters of the legislature, betrayers of their trust, and enemies to their country; that they were odious to God and man, and heaven and earth had conspired to overthrow them,

† Lord Treasurer in the reign of glorious patriotic King William the third, whose reign, for party-rage, was much similar to the present.

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that room might be made for their opposers, who had no view but to purify and save.

Long before this, the same party, in order to blacken the government of good King William, accused the Earl of Ranelagh, paymaster of the army, &c. of having misapplied twenty-one millions. It was confidently said that some millions of that money had been sent to Holland, great sums given to the favourites, and greater to bribe members of parliament. Yet to the shame, though not to the silence of party, he accounted fairly for the application of the whole. His great employment was his greatest guilt; he lost that employment, and a virtuous and eloquent patriot condescended to take one half of it, though he was wont to declare, that places and integrity were inconsistent things.

Party has neither honour nor mercy, else general charges against ministers would not thus be made at random; but it is usual for mal-contented to rail at the times, and at ministers as the authors of such times. In the mouth of every man who

has taken offence at the government, the nation is ruined; and this is the style of all such men at all times; and whenever they are unreasonably out of humour, the community must be thrown into disturbance, and the multitude who believes their disgust to proceed from a hearty zeal for the public, never fail to applaud and cry them up for true and disinterested patriots.

Did Lord Chancellor Sommers, did Lord Treasurer Godolphin, with all their virtues and abilities, with all their public spirit, with all the integrity and success of their administration, escape reproach and opposition? So far otherwise, that they were most virulently assaulted and vilified, one of them impeached, both of them exposed in libels to the mob, and forced to retire; but afterwards, when faction subsided, and truth and reason prevailed, their characters were highly revered, and their enemies were justly contemned and despised in their turn, and who will ever appear mean and vile in the eyes of posterity: yet they were popular in their day, had weight with the

people, and they were thought the assertors of patriotism.

To affirm ministers guilty without proof, is a proof of malice, and any other proof than this has not been given against the present ministry †.

What danger have we to apprehend liberty in from the characters of those employed in the administration? I see them countenance no slavish principles; I see them engaged in no desperate measures; I see them supported by men of as great probity and fortune, of as great abilities and independency, as any in the three kingdoms, men as remarkable for their love of liberty and the constitution, men who abhor slavery and all the ways of it, and would scorn to be slaves, or to suffer others to be so, and are therefore good patriots, in spite of slander and all suggestions to the contrary. Nor is any man less a patriot for keeping an employment in a ministry which he

† Such is the present base partiality and unhappy prevalence of party-spirit, that Dr. Musgrave's Letter of Hear-says has been received by the populace as a narrative of facts: thus it is that popular injustice so very much prevails.

approves, than he who dislikes the ministry because he has not an employment, of which sort I am persuaded, there are a great many at this day, and to whom our present and past disquiet is mostly to be imputed. Neither can any thing more shew the passion and partiality of any man whomsoever, than to believe and suggest what we hear often suggested, that all places are infectious, all place-men criminal. Can government exist without places, and men to fill them? Or do men ever reason thus but in their anger? Or do they ever reason thus when they and their friends are in place? It is therefore very great rudeness and calumny, and a sort of phrensy, thus to traduce men in place because they are in place. Though such calumny may be principally intended for one man, it is in effect thrown at every man who concurs with him in his measures, since if he and his measures be wicked, so are they who concur with him in them, as many of the best men and greatest subjects do. Let it therefore be considered how extensive and daring such calumny is.

The liberty of the press is undoubtedly a very valuable privilege, but it is as certain, that the abuse or evil use of this liberty is the source of much disorder and calamity to this nation; particularly that licentious mischievous freedom which is to be met with in the daily and weekly publications or news-papers, which in general are the very conduits and channels of falshood, detraction, and party-malevolence; and indeed, some of the publishers of which are so wickedly on the side of faction, that they countenance and insert whatever is most likely to support and promote sedition, by which means the multitude are incensed, and the number of their readers increased; and thus, for the sake of private advantage, they keep alive contention, and do unspeakable injury to the community: yet these seditious publishers have the shameless impudence to insinuate themselves to be the friends of liberty and public concord!

Faction is a destructive political disease, peculinary frequent in this restless, fluctuating island, brought on by the prevalency

of the worst passions, heightened and propagated by sinister malevolent party-writers; and which is productive of the greatest evils that can befall a state; and even the least evil which attends sedition, is that of disturbing and carrying off the attention of the senate from pursuing such measures, and making such institutions, as are most requisite for the safety and well-being of the nation.

One particular consideration should accompany all the actions of men, namely, that they be moral; especially where such actions affect others; more especially if they affect many; above all, if they affect society in general. And, as all writings which are addressed to the public do so, it is greatly incumbent upon the writers, and their duty as honest men, and good citizens, to take strict care that what they write be just and fair, as well as useful and important. This is the purpose, this is the morality of writing, and all men of good minds will religiously observe it; if they do not, they are most certainly no patriots. This rule, which must be allowed a

good one, is too little regarded, commonly quite neglected, or basely violated, as in numerous instances, but particularly in Mr. Wilkes's North-Briton, which, instead of doing public good, is vilely calculated to inflame and rouse the passions, create enmity, misrepresent and scurrilize men, falsify things, and do popular injustice and mischief.

What else is the reason that low and ignorant writers are generally abusive, but that they want matter and manners? Besides, the road of abuse is so common, and so easy, that it requires no genius, or any one good quality or accomplishment, to pursue it. Any creature that can speak, can lye and call names; and the lowest, the most foolish, and most vicious of our race, excel most in it.

The morality of writing ought to be considered and attended to by all who write, in whatsoever they write, that their writings be true, candid, and useful; that they treat others benevolently, and that for every proposition which they advance, and every conclusion or character which they draw,

they can answer to God, to the world, and to their own conscience. If this reasonable rule, of the morality of writings, were observed, how much good would it do, how much evil prevent? It would certainly bring great quiet to the public, and to particulars, and greatly promote peace, charity, and honesty. Nothing can be more dishonest, or more cowardly, than for a man to sit safely and covertly in his closet, and from thence, as from a citadel, assault the tender characters of men with vile slander and aspersions, whether he doth it by descriptions, innuendoes, false parallels, or any other way. The world is prone to censure, and to believe evil of the best and most innocent of men, whenever it is charged upon them by the worst; and he must be the wickedest of all creatures, who scatters reproaches to hurt the harmless, and charges any man whomsoever with any unjust imputations whatsoever. It is still an aggravation of such wickedness, when by it public uproar and discontents are raised, and the people are inflamed and terrified by a torrent of slander and calumnies cast upon

their governors.—True patriotism abhors all this, and were it attended to, would cure it.

There is a virtuous rectitude in the mind of every honest man, a love of justice and truth, and an abhorrence of whatever is unrighteous and untrue. And the same honesty of heart which determines a man to be just in his private dealings, will influence and direct his public conduct, and he will be full as tender of injuring the character, and misrepresenting of public men, as those of his private neighbours.—A strict attachment to this equitable rule, would make us the happiest and most potent people upon earth, whereas the present wicked violation of it, renders us weak, vexatious, and contemptible.

Had Mr. Wilkes, and his hot adherents, been the well-paid grateful pensioners of France, they could not have acted more for its interest, better suited its policy, or done any thing which could so much please its malignity, as the disunion they have brought about, and the fierce combustion

they have raised in this too easily inflamed nation.

It was undoubtedly a shrewd and subtle resentment of the French, to cashier and exile a Scotch officer in their service, for challenging to fight Mr. Wilkes in a duel, when at Paris. The great care they took to preserve so valuable a life, evinces the profound regard they had for him; and no less proves, that the French have, to an extensive degree, the gift of political prescience, so as to have foreseen his return to his native country, and the unhappy confusion he would put it into upon his arrival.

As the French had a political tenderness for Mr. Wilkes's preservation, so it must be owned, that he has not been ungrateful to them; for he has done every thing for their interest, against the interest of his country; and the French, I dare say, are so sensible of this, that if ever he is under a necessity to leave Britain, Paris will be to him a city of refuge, and the whole kingdom a safe and secure asylum.

In what is advanced, I would by no means have it understood, as if I meant that all

who are influenced on the side of Wilkes and his abettors, are the espousers of faction, far from it; I am thoroughly sensible that many, very many, worthy men, and sincere lovers of their country, are led into opposition and injurious conceptions of the government, through the base artifice, false colourings, and foul misrepresentations, of crafty, sinister mal-contents. We often find persons of integrity without any great share of penetration in party-affairs; but what is incomparably worse, and matter of detestation, we much oftener find men of deep subtlety and penetration destitute of integrity; and it is not to be wondered at, if the latter, in many cases, impose upon, cajole, and mislead the former, by making them the tools of their own private interest, under the specious pretext of supporting the interest and liberties of the public: this is surely the most obvious reason why we meet with good men engaged in a bad cause; yet 'tis not so easy to account, why we sometimes find very worthless men espousing a good one; however, the case is undoubtedly fact in both respects; and the

unhappiness of the matter is, that as good men give weight and sanction to a bad cause, so evil men detract from, and cast a shade of disgrace on a truly good one; and withal we may venture to conclude, that a real virtuous man will never be concerned in measures hurtful to his country, but from an error of judgment, and that a vicious man will never pay any regard to general welfare but from a selfish mercenary consideration, and who at all times will be ready to reverse a good action when it best suits his particular interest to do so.

Peace and unanimity are the most salutary invigorating blessings of a state, and what all judicious good men, and true patriots, will zealously endeavour to preserve and cultivate; and what none but false patriots, and seditious sinister incendiaries will offer to debilitate or pervert.

The Romans, when under their best and freest government, were extremely jealous of, and even made it punishable for any one to engross the people's affection, by making fair and florid pretences of their care and concern for the public good; al-

lowing virtuous, noble, heroic actions only, to be the legal measures of obtaining public honour and esteem; and whilst this very wise edict existed, the Romans were unanimous, happy, and victorious; but when it ceased, assuming impudence and audacious pretence took the lead of real merit; and then it was, that a wicked Catiline, by uttering calumny on one hand, and expressing an uncommon regard for his country on the other, did ingratiate himself into the favour of the populace, and thereby raised a powerful faction, which threatened a change of government: and now it is, that a baneful Wilkes, and his abettors, have by the very same means, ensnared the multitude, and involved their country in riots, animosities, and faction.

A good and rightful sovereign has not only a just claim to the allegiance of his people, but the best title to their affections, and whoever, by base means, and for vile purposes, seek to supplant or rival him in these, are the worst sort of traitors; seeing no monarch can be said to reign either happily or safely who has not the love of his

subjects. As the king has far greater interest in the happiness and prosperity of his people than any other individual, he therefore may be well allowed to have the highest and most distinguished regard and solicitude for their welfare; for, indeed, not any thing can be more manifest, than that his own true dignity and felicity are strictly connected with that of his subjects welfare; so that he only can be justly termed a happy prince who governs a virtuous and a happy people; and to which end, a wise and good prince will ever exert his utmost efforts to make them such; and his subjects on their part, ought with alacrity to yield a peaceful obedience to that regal authority with which he is invested, and to strengthen his hands by their unanimity in the distribution of justice, and in protecting them from foreign and domestic enemies.

That the histories of our own and other nations have innumerable instances of princes abusing their power, and of their acting horribly inconsistent with their own, and their subjects happiness, must be granted; but thanks be to God, our case is happily

otherwise in that respect, we having a prince truly virtuous, truly patriotic, and endowed with every fit disposition to make us a happy, prosperous, and a powerful people; but alas! our wantonness of temper, our envious, ambitious, and impetuous passions serve to enrage, disunite, and mislead us; so that his hands are, as it were, fettered and enfeebled by faction; and every anxious propensity to promote our common welfare, opposed and discouraged. In this we are profoundly injurious to ourselves, and cruel to our prince, whose crown we have been decking with thorns ever since his accession, and have made his throne much more the elevated seat of fable concern and disquietude, than that of imperial satisfaction and complacency.

How is it possible for a prince, even of the most extensive goodness and singular penetration, to satisfy his people in the chusing of his ministry, whilst those who are not, and ought not, to be admitted into the administration, become mal-contents because they are not admitted; and who, by false colourings, and insidious representations,

practise upon the multitude, and make them highly discontented with their governors, because they are not of the number, or because they are not in places suitable to their ambition or avarice? O ye credulous and seduced MANY! if you would enjoy true and permanent LIBERTY, freely exercise your rational powers, and think, and reason, and judge for yourselves, that you may be enabled to make a juster estimate of men and measures; and that you may in duty and tendernefs to the best of princes, and in commiseration to yourselves, and your unhappily divided country, be no longer deluded and imposed upon by false assuming patriots, who, under the plausible pretence of securing to you liberties which are in no danger, (and which they are grossly abusing) make you the dupes of their sinister designs, as well as the tools of their partial personal resentment, by which means they embarrass the nation in tumultuous factions, and bring you under the worst sort of vassalage, I mean, that of subjecting yourselves to be led by their fallacious dictates, and of being under (by their influence) the

dominion of unsocial, irritating, destructive passions.

By our unremitting national strife, how much do we exhilarate our foes, depress our friends, prejudice our common interest, and aggrieve our truly GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN? A prince who merits our most faithful and pacific allegiance, and whose sentiments cannot but have the strictest concurrence with those of sage TIGRANES, king of Armenia, of whom it is said, that upon the day of his coronation he took the regal diadem in his hand, and looking a long while attentively upon it, at length he disclosed his thoughts in these pathetic expressions: "Thou NOBLE, rather than HAPPY ornament! did men but consider what numerous briers are intermixed with thy radiant jewels, and reflect upon those cares and anxieties which are thy indispensable concomitants, if they saw thee lying beneath their feet, they would not so much as take thee up."

I shall make free to assert, that the sole cause of our political evils, and other avoidable infelicities, is our not sufficiently at-

tending to, or not exerting of our moral directive powers; and thus it is, that we are the contemners of divine legislation, the violators of the laws, and abusers of the privileges, of the best constructed, and most lenitive government upon earth; and thus it is, that we are querelous, dissatisfied, ungrateful subjects to the best disposed, and most benign of princes.

King William, of glorious, and ever to be revered memory, the great RESTORER of our religious and civil liberties, and the common friend of liberty throughout Europe, how grievously was his reign disturb'd, and his royal breast afflicted, with outrageous OPPOSITION; which was so monstrously ungrateful, and so cruelly sanguine, as more than once to attempt regicide; the which OPPOSITION, if it had fully succeeded, instead of a Protestant prince, of the illustrious house of BRUNSWICK, we should have had a Popish prince to reign and rule over us; and very possibly, have become thereby, the contemptible dependents of a faithless, enslaving, neighbouring monarchy.

This great and good prince, in his last speech to his people, in parliament assembled, gave them the following paternal, conciliating, and truly patriotic admonition, which at all times ought far more to be attended to than any thing that has been said by seditious Wilkes, and his litigious coadjutors; and with which I shall conclude, and leave the multitude to judge, whether the candid, salutary advice of the best of kings, or the pernicious irritating declamation of the worst of subjects, is to be followed, and strictly adhered to.

“ Let me conjure you to disappoint the
 “ hopes of our enemies by your UNANIMITY.
 “ I have shewn, and will always shew, how
 “ desirous I am to be the common father of
 “ all my people; do you, in like manner,
 “ lay aside parties and divisions; let there
 “ be no other distinction heard of among
 “ us for the future, but of those who are
 “ for the Protestant religion and the present
 “ establishment, and of those who mean a
 “ Popish prince and a French government.”

T H E E N D.

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